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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 001511

SIPDIS

NSC FOR C. BARTON  
USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [VE](#)  
SUBJECT: EDUCATION, BOLIVARIAN STYLE

REF: CARACAS 01104

Classified By: Political Counselor Abelardo Arias for reason 1.4 (d).

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SUMMARY  
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1. (U) The Venezuelan Ministry of Education has published five books outlining Venezuela,s educational plans from pre-school through the post-secondary level. The books appear to be geared to school teachers, administrators and others who deal directly with public education. As a drawn-out mission statement for the Bolivarian educational system, the books are saturated with nationalistic and Bolivarian rhetoric. End Summary.

2. (U) After Poloff requested a meeting with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry sent Poloff five books outlining Venezuela,s educational plans. The first, "The Bolivarian Education," deals with the educational system in general, while the other four discuss specific educational levels: "Little Simon Project" (0-6 years); "Bolivarian School" (7-12 years); "Bolivarian High School" (13-18 years); and "Robinsonian Technical Schools" (post-secondary). Published in Caracas in September and November of 2004, the books come complete with glossy covers and color graphs and pictures and range from 50 to 125 pages.

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LA EDUCACION BOLIVARIANA  
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3. (U) "The Bolivarian Education," an extended mission statement for Venezuelan education, outlines programs and policies needed to achieve universal and equal education. Full of rhetoric about education being &at the heart of endogenous development,8 the book encourages increasing access for those historically left out of the educational system (such as the poor, or indigenous populations), training teachers whose &primary functions are the formation of republicans for the construction of the New Republic,8 and passing from a &political democracy8 to a &social democracy8 that rejects the neoliberal tendencies of the 1990s. Charts and graphs document the levels of juvenile delinquency, dropouts, grade repetitions, and recent investments made in educational facilities. Many of the graphs are theoretical, and most are replicated in the other books. Goals and recent achievements are noted, but are given in vague terms (&curriculum reform8, &neutralization of barriers8).

4. (U) The method the GOV intends to use, according to the publication, mandates the creation of theoretical &spaces8 and the universalization of education by 2006. In the Bolivarian educational system, the "New School8 becomes the center for the integration of the family, community and state and for the production of Bolivarian citizens. The "spaces" the schools are to create focus on social issues and development and consist of themes such as peace, production, creation, health, technological innovation and community development/work.

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PROYECTO SIMONCITO  
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5. (U) "Little Simon Project8 is the shortest book and presents pre-schools as a way to reduce inequality and protect the youngest members of society from mistreatment, sexual abuse, and medical problems through early detection. Pre-school education, according to this book, also serves to strengthen the family as the primary social structure and would reduce educational expenses by lowering the rate of student repetition (which is as high as 7-8% in some grades) in subsequent years.

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ESCUELAS BOLIVARIANAS  
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16. (U) Elementary schools, according to "Bolivarian Schools," should teach students to develop a national and regional consciousness to integrate peoples of South and Central America as well as the Antilles. Espousing themes of

equality, social justice and democratic participation, the book encourages the integration of students, parents, the community and the state into the management of the elementary schools. Above all, the book says, the Bolivarian elementary school is to be a "socially transforming" institution, where both the individual students and the community are rallied and trained to further social justice, local development and the Bolivarian revolution in general.

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LICEO BOLIVARIANO  
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17. (U) The cover of the volume entitled "Bolivarian High Schools" features a picture of President Chavez with a group of schoolgirls. It focuses on high school education, but is largely a repetition of information found in the other books. However, the book does define the pedagogical profile of the new Bolivarian Faculty Member. Such a teacher or administrator should promote: a local, national, Latin American and global consciousness; the involvement of community groups and networks in the educational process; and above all, the integration of Bolivarian ideals into all aspects of education. An indigenous faculty member has the added requirements of being a practicing and committed member of the same indigenous group that he or she is servicing.

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ESCUELAS TECNICAS ROBINSONIANAS  
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18. (U) The book "Robinsonian Technical Schools" deals with the post-secondary technical schools and is the most specific of the books. In 2004, there were approximately 180,000 students in 70 technical schools, according to the book. The focus of the technical schools is preparing students to be good employees. The book places an emphasis on the development of non-petroleum industries and sustainable endogenous development, especially agriculture, to ensure the security and reliability of the food supply. The technical schools highlighted in the book offer the following specialties: agriculture (nine subspecialties, such as Agriculture Science, Agriculture Production and Agrotourism); Arts; Health and Social Services (Clinical Laboratory, Sanitary Inspection); Industry (Metallurgy, Electronics, Civil Construction, Industrial Chemistry, Aeronautical Sciences, Naval Sciences); Commercial and Service Administration; Security and Defense; and Bilingual and Intercultural Education. The book also discusses nationwide contests for students of all ages and the reactivation of a national internship program for students in the technical schools.

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COMMENT  
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19. (C) The content and the publishing quality of the books ) and the fact that the GOV contemplates that education is to be universalized by 2006 ) suggests that the books are intended to inform and convince educators (teachers, principals, etc.) of the virtue of Bolivarian education. Though the books are light on details and full of rhetoric, they lay out a vision, a mission statement of sorts, for an educational system that integrates children, teachers, parents, the community and the state to facilitate the construction of a "New Republic." Phrasing similar to wording used in proposals that have raised concerns among Chavez opponents (Comunidad Educativa Bolivariana and Proyecto 15) indicate Chavez's educational plans are not random or quickly pieced together, but instead follow a vision and are integral to his "Bolivarian Revolution." Favorite Chavez catch phrases and themes ) endogenous development, expansion of non-petroleum sectors, agriculture development, building a national and Latin-American consciousness ) would characterize all levels of the educational system under the vision presented in these publications. The emphasis throughout is on creating new Bolivarians - not necessarily on providing a quality education.

Brownfield

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